

Brainstorming Physical Activity Discussion

Invite members of the audience to share their insights about exercise with each other. The following questions may be helpful in encouraging discussion:

- What do they do each day to be physically active?
- Which exercises do they prefer or enjoy the most? Why?
- How do they make exercise more interesting?
- Does anyone walk in a group? Are there any mall walkers present?
- Where do they walk in the communities? Where do they enjoy walking locally?
- How do they exercise in inclement weather?
- What activities are offered in their communities, at the local senior center, “Y” or religious center?

Supplemental Information:

- Explain to the audience that exercise is a key factor in preventing osteoporosis and in slowing bone loss. Exercise strengthens bones and muscles, helps maintain balance, and enhances our reflexes. Exercise also increases energy, reduces stress, promotes cardiovascular health, and contributes to an overall sense of well being.
- Muscles pulling on bone builds bone. For example, tennis players have stronger muscles and denser bones in their playing arms. Cyclists may have stronger leg muscles and denser leg bones.
- Daily activities such as hand washing clothes, kneading bread, raking, sweeping, and rolling down a car window are strengthening activities.
- Other healthy exercises include:
 - walking (one of the best)
 - hiking
 - climbing stairs
 - dancing
 - treadmill

- It is possible to add more movement to one's daily activities by making simple changes like:
 - parking the car at the far end of the parking lot
 - taking the stairs instead of the elevator
 - standing instead of sitting
 - standing and stretching or lifting light weights while watching television
 - doing pelvic tilts while waiting in line

It is very important that everyone should consult a doctor before beginning any type of exercise.

- Individuals with high blood pressure should take extra precautions against dizziness, which can result in injury when exercising.
- Those with back problems may require an exercise program prescribed by a physician and instructed by a physical therapist or exercise physiologist.
- Individuals who have been relatively inactive should begin slowly with any kind of exercise program, and gradually build up their amount of exercise. Any kind of exercise, no matter how simple, is beneficial. The intensity and duration of the exercise should increase gradually.

Special Considerations for Mature Adults/Seniors:

- Seniors should begin with 5 to 10 minutes twice a week and build up slowly, adding a few minutes each week until they build up to 30 minute periods, three times a week.
- Lifting small objects or light weights help seniors build muscle, which strengthens bones.
- Exercises that improve balance are very important for elders.
- Do not over-exercise. Women who over-exercise to the point of stopping menstruation weaken their bones.
- Stand or sit up straight. Poor posture interferes with breathing, raises blood pressure, contributes to dowagers hump, and increases the risk of falling. Correcting posture helps improve balance and strengthen muscles.